A STUDY ON FACTORS AFFECTING THE PURCHASE OF LUXURY FASHION APPAREL BRANDS AMONG WOMEN CONSUMERS IN KERALA STATE

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Abstract
Consumer market for fashion apparel has become more diverse by designer brands, store brands, personalization, advertising, and ethnicity in the market place. The exploratory factor analysis shows that consumers' uniqueness, store attributes, reference groups, product attributes and promotional measures are the factors affecting the purchase of luxury fashion apparel brands by women consumers. The regression analysis indicates that consumers' uniqueness, store attributes, product attributes and promotional measures are positively and significantly influencing the average purchase value per visit by women consumers. Since, the women consumers prefer branded apparels, which have good quality. This means that the apparel store should brand their product or should sell branded apparels more than that of unbranded apparel. While planning the merchandise mix this should be taken care very much. In addition, the apparel store should do promotions aggressively, appropriately and attractively which are very much appeal to the women consumers.

Key Words: Exploratory Factor Analysis, Luxury Fashion Apparel, Regression, Women Consumers.

1. INTRODUCTION
The Indian economy has been witnessing a massive change for the last three decades because of the various dynamics of the business. Due to rapid urbanization and higher disposal of incomes, Indian consumers are now becoming more brand conscious and fashion conscious. Indian consumers are becoming more materialistic and they need global, branded and local apparel products. Consumer market for fashion apparel has become more diverse by designer brands, store brands, personalization, advertising, and ethnicity in the market place.

The consumer values like functionality, fitness for purpose and efficiency significantly contribute in driving cultural change and recognizing suitable fashion to strategically fit with the lifestyles (Hartley and Montgomery, 2009). The growing technology led apparel selling is one of the major stimulants for inducing change in fashion and consumer culture.

Consumers get involved in exhibiting fashion and lifestyle as an aesthetic way of presenting their personality. Hence, fashion apparel is often considered as an opportunity for communicating a new order of identity of a person. In this process, there are both cognitive and affective incentives that translate into potential welfare gains (or indifference) for the consumer in a given social and work related environment (Bianchi, 2002).

Manufactures and retailers apply both push and pull strategies to make promotions of fashion apparel effective and advantages to the consumers. At the same time, the competition is also growing within the apparel industry because of the large number of players entering the markets both from national and international levels. These changes in the business environment directly influence the overall lifestyle of the people. The changes in the purchasing behaviour of consumers in turn have impact on the industry directly or indirectly. In order to attract and retain customers the companies have to come up with various business strategies.

In this juncture, the companies are in a position to understand the complexities of Indian women consumers and customized their products to have the right mix to meet the requirements have been successful and extracted benefits from the growing Indian market. The understanding of factors affecting the purchase of luxury fashion apparel brands among women consumers help the new entrants at both domestic and foreign retailers who want to enter in the Indian apparel market. Therefore, the present research is attempted to study the factors affecting the purchase of luxury fashion apparel brands among women consumers in Kerala state.

2. METHODOLOGY
The Kerala State has been purposively selected for the present study. The 1200 women consumers of luxury fashion apparel brands have been selected for the present study by adopting random sampling technique and the data and information pertain to the year 2015-2016. In order to examine the socio-economic characteristics of women consumers of luxury fashion apparel

brands, the frequency and percentage analysis have been worked out. In order to identify the factors affecting the purchase of luxury fashion apparel brands among women consumers, the exploratory factor analysis has been employed. In order to analyze the influence of factors affecting the purchase of luxury fashion apparel brands on average purchase value per visit by women consumers, the multiple linear regressions has been applied.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
3.1. Socio-Economic Characteristics Of Women Consumers Of Luxury Fashion Apparel Brands
The socio-economic characteristics of women consumers of luxury fashion apparel brands were analyzed and the results are presented in Table 1. The results show that about 31.08 per cent of women consumers belong to the age group of 21 – 30 years followed by 31 – 40 years (25.17 per cent), 16 – 20 years (23.17 per cent), 41 – 50 years (14.83 per cent) and above 50 years (5.75 per cent). It is clear that about 26.92 per cent of women consumers have the educational qualification of post graduation followed by higher secondary (22.00 per cent), graduation (20.34 per cent), diploma (10.83 per cent), secondary (10.33 per cent) and professionals (9.58 per cent).

The results indicate that about 38.08 per cent of women consumers are working in private sector followed by Government sector (18.08 per cent), student (12.92 per cent), business (11.25 per cent), housewife (10.25 per cent) and retired (9.42 per cent). It is observed that about 28.33 per cent of women consumers belong to the monthly income group of Rs.20,001 – Rs.30,000 followed by Rs.10,001 – Rs.20,000 (20.83 per cent), Rs.30,001 – Rs.40,000 (19.42 per cent), below Rs.10,000 (16.17 per cent), Rs.40,001 – Rs.50,000 (11.58 per cent) and above Rs.50,000 (3.67 per cent).

The results reveal that about 61.83 per cent of women consumers are married, while, the rest of 38.17 per cent of women consumers are unmarried. It is apparent that about 42.58 per cent of women consumers are residing in semi-urban area followed by urban area (36.75 per cent) and rural area (20.67 per cent).

Table- 1,Socio-Economic Characteristics of Women Consumers of Luxury Fashion Apparel Brands

Socio-Economic Profile	Number of Women Consumers	Percentage
Age Group		
16 – 20 years	278	23.17
21 – 30 years	373	31.08
31 – 40 years	302	25.17
41 – 50 years	178	14.83
Above 50 years	69	5.75
Educational Qualification		
Secondary	124	10.33
Higher Secondary	264	22.00
Diploma	130	10.83
Graduation	244	20.34
Post-Graduation	323	26.92
Professionals	115	9.58
Socio-Economic Profile	**Number of Women Consumers**	**Percentage**
Occupation		
Business	135	11.25
Government Sector	217	18.08
Private Sector	457	38.08
Retired	113	9.42
Housewife	123	10.25
Student	135	11.25
Monthly Income		
Below Rs.10,000	194	16.17
Rs.10,001 – Rs.20,000	250	20.83
Rs.20,001 – Rs.30,000	340	28.33

Rs.30,001 – Rs.40,000	233	19.42
Rs.40,001 – Rs.50,000	139	11.58
Above Rs.50,000	44	3.67
Marital Status		
Married	742	61.83
Unmarried	458	38.17
Residential Area		
Urban	441	36.75
Semi-Urban	511	42.58
Rural	248	20.67

3.2. Factors Affecting the Purchase of Luxury Fashion Apparel Brands Among Women Consumers
In order to identify the factors affecting the purchase of luxury fashion apparel brands among women consumers, the exploratory factor analysis has been employed. The principal component method of factor analysis was carried out with Eigen values greater than one through varimax rotation and the results obtained through rotated component matrix are presented in Table 2. The results of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO test) measure of sampling adequacy (KMO = 0.832) and Bartlett's test of Sphericity (Chi-square Value = 0.0014; Significance = 0.000) indicates that the factor analysis method is appropriate.

There are five independent groups which are extracted accounting for a total of 83.67 per cent of variations on 42 variables. The each of the five factors contributes to 23.68 per cent, 19.52 per cent, 16.70 per cent, 12.45 per cent and 11.32 per cent respectively.

Table- 2, Factors Affecting the Purchase of Luxury Fashion Apparel Brands Among Women Consumers

Factor	Item	Rotated Factor Loadings	Eigen Value	% of Variation	Factor Name
I	Brand Consciousness	0.76	3.57	23.68	**Consumers' Uniqueness**
	Fashion Consciousness	0.72			
	Store Image	0.68			
	Store Loyalty	0.61			
	Gift	-0.62			
	Impulse Buying	0.66			
	Planned Apparel Purchase	0.71			
	Brand Loyalty	0.69			
	Emotional Attachment	0.63			
	Ready Made Garment Preference	0.70			
	Comparison Shopping	-0.74			
	Bargain Behaviour	0.65			
	Environmental Concern	0.73			
	Ethics	-0.68			
II	Stock availability	0.72	2.43	19.52	**Store Attributes**
	Update	0.63			
	Credit Facility	-0.68			
	Trial Room	0.70			
	Online Facility	0.71			
	Debt Card Usage	-0.65			
	Shopping Space	0.71			
	Parking Facilities	0.69			
	Alteration Facility	0.62			
	Membership Card	-0.70			

III	TV Show	-0.73	1.89	16.70	**Reference Groups**
	Celebrity	0.70			
	Magazine	0.69			
	Friend's Influence	0.66			
	Family's Influence	0.69			
	Peer's Influence	0.71			
	Spouse's Influence	0.67			
	Colleague's Influence	-0.65			
IV	Style	0.74			**Product Attributes**
	Price	0.69			
	Fit	0.70	1.35	12.45	
	Quality	0.67			
	Brand	0.73			
V	Pricing Techniques	0.68			**Promotional Measures**
	Coupon	0.70			
	Advertisement	0.71	1.09	11.32	
	Visual Displays	0.69			
	Marketing Techniques	0.66			
	Cumulative % of Variation			83.67	
	Cronbach's Alpha				0.89

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
Rotation converged in 13 iterations.
Factor-I: From the results, it is inferred that out of 42 variables, 14 variables have their high, relatively tightly grouped factor loadings on factor-I.

This factor consists of
- Brand Consciousness (0.76)
- Fashion Consciousness (0.72)
- Store Image (0.68)
- Store Loyalty (0.61)
- Gift (-0.62)
- Impulse Buying (0.66)
- Planned Apparel Purchase (0.71)
- Brand Loyalty (0.69)
- Emotional Attachment (0.63)
- Ready Made Garment Preference (0.70)
- Comparison Shopping (-0.74)
- Bargain Behaviour (0.65)
- Environmental Concern (0.73)
- Ethics (-0.68)

Hence, this factor is named as **"Consumers' Uniqueness".**

Factor-II: is formed with
- Stock availability (0.72)
- Update (0.63)
- Credit Facility (-0.68)
- Trial Room (0.70)

- Online Facility (0.71)
- Debt Card Usage (-0.65)
- Shopping Space (0.71)
- Parking Facilities (0.69)
- Alteration Facility (0.62)
- Membership Card (-0.70)

These variables are named as **"Store Attributes".**

Factor-III: This factor includes
- TV Show (-0.73)
- Celebrity (0.70)
- Magazine (0.69)
- Friend's Influence (0.66)
- Family's Influence (0.69)
- Peer's Influence (0.71)
- Spouse's Influence (0.67)
- Colleague's Influence (-0.65)

These variables are named as **"Reference Groups".**

Factor-IV: This factor is formed with
- Style (0.74)
- Price (0.69)
- Fit (0.70)
- Quality (0.67)
- Brand (0.73)

This factor is named as **"Product Attributes".**

Factor-V: is formed with
- Pricing Techniques (0.68)
- Coupon (0.70)
- Advertisement (0.71)
- Visual Displays (0.69)
- Marketing Techniques (0.66)

These variables are named as **"Promotional Measures".**

The Cronbach's Alpha of the scale was 0.89 indicating that each measure demonstrated acceptable internal consistency. It is inferred that consumers' uniqueness, store attributes, reference groups, product attributes and promotional measures are the factors affecting the purchase of luxury fashion apparel brands by women consumers.

3.3. Influence of Factors Affecting the Purchase of Luxury Fashion Apparel Brands on Average Purchase Value per Visit by Women Consumers
In order to analyze the influence of factors affecting the purchase of luxury fashion apparel brands on average purchase value per visit by women consumers, the multiple linear regressions has been employed and the results are presented in Table-3. The factors affecting the purchase of luxury fashion apparel brands derived from exploratory factor analysis are considered as independent variables and the average purchase value per visit is considered as dependent variable.

The results show that the coefficient of multiple determinations (R^2) is 0.68 and adjusted R^2 is 0.66 indicating the regression model is good fit. It is inferred that about 66.00 per cent of the variation in dependent variable (Average Purchase Value per Visit) is explained by the independent variables (Factors Affecting the Purchase of Luxury Fashion Apparel Brands). The F-value of 46.054 is statistically significant at one per cent level indicating that the model is significant.

Table- 3, Influence of Factors Affecting the Purchase of Luxury Fashion Apparel Brands on Average Purchase Value per Visit by Women Consumers

Factors Affecting the Purchase of Luxury Fashion Apparel Brands	Regression Co-efficients	t-Value	Sig.
Intercept	5.097**	13.109	.000
Consumers' Uniqueness (X_1)	.468**	9.482	.000
Store Attributes (X_2)	.370**	8.962	.000
Reference Groups (X_3)	.134	1.047	.463
Product Attributes (X_4)	.552**	10.392	.000
Promotional Measures (X_5)	.416**	9.652	.000
R^2	0.68	-	-
Adjusted R^2	0.66	-	-
F	46.054	-	.000
N	1200	-	-

*Note: ** Significance at one per cent level*

The results indicate that consumers' uniqueness, store attributes, product attributes and promotional measures are positively and significantly influencing the average purchase value per visit by women consumers at one per cent level. Hence, the null hypothesis of there is no significant influence of factors affecting the purchase of luxury fashion apparel brands on average purchase value per visit by women consumers is rejected.

4. CONCLUSION

Majority of the women consumers belong to the age group of 21 – 30 years and most of the women consumers have the educational qualification of post-graduation. Majority of the women consumers are working in private sector and most of the women consumers belong to the monthly income group of Rs.20,001 – Rs.30,000. Majority of the women consumers are married and most of the women consumers are residing in semi-urban area.

The exploratory factor analysis shows that consumers' uniqueness, store attributes, reference groups, product attributes and promotional measures are the factors affecting the purchase of luxury fashion apparel brands by women consumers.

The regression analysis indicates that consumers' uniqueness, store attributes, product attributes and promotional measures are positively and significantly influencing the average purchase value per visit by women consumers.

The apparel stores should develop strategies to enhance the store image among the women consumers. The apparel stores also should bring loyalty programmes both for the particular apparel brand and for the store itself.

The apparel store should keep wide assortment of stocks and also the stores should have convenient and adequate number of trial rooms. As most of the women consumers are willing to receive the updates of latest apparel arrivals though e - mails and SMS, the stores should make use of this opportunity as their promotional platform. Online facility is also becoming important preference among the women consumers.

Since, the women consumers prefer branded apparels, which have good quality. This means that the apparel store should brand their product or should sell branded apparels more than that of unbranded apparel. While planning the merchandise mix this should be taken care very much. In addition, the apparel store should do promotions aggressively, appropriately and attractively which are very much appeal to the women consumers.

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